

DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP

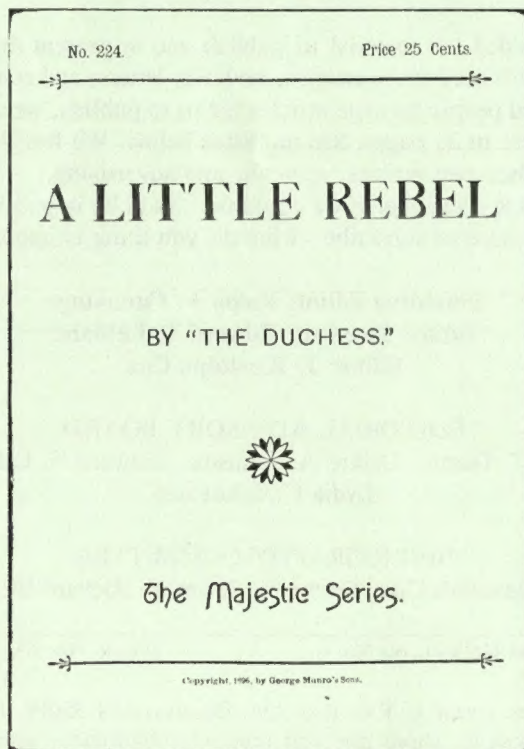
A magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and study of old-time dime and nickel novels, popular story papers, series books, and pulp magazines

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DIME NOVEL SKETCHES



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THE HITCHING POST

The fare this issue has something of a cosmopolitan theme: Asia and North Africa, and points beyond and between. Our feature article is the first in a series to examine Asians in popular fiction and will be followed by a look at Sax Rohmer, the Japanese detective in the *Nick Carter Weekly*, and the Chinatown episodes in *Secret Service*. Stay tuned.

We have been hearing that the *Dime Novel Round-Up* needs to publish more advertising, that there are readers who may open its pages looking for lists of books to buy and sell; seeing none they will close the magazine and turn elsewhere. Is this true? Is this the typical *Dime Novel Round-Up* reader? Is the *Round-Up*, like television, primarily an advertising medium, or an information forum?

We have searched for material to publish and at present there is a healthy inventory. We still need more articles, reviews, letters, and comments to print.

Just as we need people to write articles for us to publish, we also need people who will advertise in its pages. See our rates below. We feel there should be a healthy balance between articles, reviews, and advertising.

We can't please everyone. If we could we would be in politics. This is your magazine—you chose to subscribe—what do you think is important?

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MR. MOTO AND THE PULPS

Jon M. Suter
Houston Baptist University

My first awareness of John P. Marquand probably came with a late night showing in 1955 of *The Late George Apley*, but awareness of Mr. Moto came in 1956 in a volume of Reader's Digest Condensed Books in which *Stopover: Tokyo* was the final selection. The only element of the plot which I retained over the decades was the implied brutal death of the heroine. I first began to grasp the notion that damsels in distress might not always be rescued in the nick of time and that their would-be rescuers might wear very tarnished armor.

Another problem which caused *Stopover: Tokyo* (now known as *Right You Are, Mr. Moto*) to remain in my mind was my inability to reconcile the Mr. Moto in that story with the Mr. Moto so glowingly described by my parents. I know now that their memories were based on the Peter Lorre films rather than on the five Moto novels published between 1935 and 1942.

For several years I have conducted a graduate seminar on detective fiction. The inclusion or exclusion of the well-known Mr. Moto is a perennial problem because of the syllabus-dictated policy of excluding spy novels as a sub-genre. Richard Wires's comprehensive and definitive analysis of the dual aspects of Mr. Moto's career has left only a few scattered crumbs for the rest of us to growl over.

My purpose is to explore the context from which readers of the *Saturday Evening Post* serialized versions would have interpreted the first four novels, with an emphasis on the second, *Thank You, Mr. Moto*, and to demonstrate that by blending verisimilitude with more sensational elements Marquand was able to generate reader interest from diverse audiences.

Asian characters in American popular literature often tended to mirror Anglo-American xenophobia and ranged from the demonic to the merely ludicrous to the beatific and romantic. Early pulp magazines often

reinforced negative stereotypes; e.g., the cover of the July 1922 issue of *Blue Book Magazine* featured the artist J. E. Allen's "Darkest at the Dawn" in which a young red-haired woman, her clothes in tatters, holds an angry mob of club-wielding Boxers at bay with a pistol (Goodstone, plate 7). In the 1930s, comic strips such as *Terry and the Pirates* reinforced the view of Asia in general and China in particular as lawless quagmires. As World War II approached, such pulp magazines as *Operator #5* helped fan anti-Japanese sentiment; Robert Weinberg cites two particularly significant episodes, "The Yellow Scourge" and "The Invasion of the Yellow Hordes" (Weinberg, "Operator #5," 448-50).

The pulps were not the only perpetrators of the Yellow Peril motif. *Collier's Weekly*, usually classed as a "slick," joyously serialized the nefarious exploits of Dr. Fu Manchu, described by his British chronicler, Sax Rohmer, as "the Yellow Peril incarnate." Clones of the insidious doctor, including Wu Fang and Dr. Yen Sin, never achieved the popularity of Rohmer's creation but added to the negative view of Asians.

The writings of Alice Tisdale Hobart and Pearl S. Buck were far more sympathetic to China and of higher literary quality, but catered to a very different audience. Their readers would have disdained a Fu Manchu story regardless of its appearance in a "slick" magazine.

Negative stereotypes were softened somewhat by the first appearance in 1922 of Earl Derr Biggers's Charlie Chan. Although many of the films based on the character are currently seen as racist, the original novels gave the reading public a sympathetic Asian character worthy of respect as well as chuckles. The death of Biggers in 1933 deprived the *Saturday Evening Post* of a market-proven character. To fill the gap, Mr. Moto was drafted, but he was not as comforting a figure as Charlie Chan; instead he was enigmatic and reserved and capable of (to American readers) amoral deceit and violence.

The creation of the character, Marquand's relationships with George Horace Lorimer of the *Saturday Evening Post* and with his literary agent Carol Brandt, and his domestic difficulties in the 1930s have been thoroughly documented by Millicent Bell and Stephen Birmingham, as well as by Richard Wires.

Marquand was well-acquainted with the requirements of "slick" fiction; his first published work had appeared in the *Ladies' Home Journal* and he had prospered in that market for nearly fifteen years (Gross 21). Readers of the "slicks" would have recognized the Marquand name and would have accepted a "thriller" from him.

The importance of Marquand's 1934 trip to Asia as a source of ideas and motifs cannot be overstressed. His experiences with Japanese detectives who had him under close surveillance were probably the basis of Mr. Moto (Wires 74).

It is worth noting that Mr. Moto's alleged period of service as a valet in America had a counterpart in Britain. C. Daly King's detective, Travis Tarrant, had a Japanese butler who was also a spy. Katoh, as described in "The Episode of the Codex' Curse," resembled Mr. Moto in stature and sibilliance; he also held a doctorate in medicine (King 32).

In "The Episode of the Man with Three Eyes," a guest asked Tarrant if Katoh had gone "...to compare pressing irons and steak grills with other Japs?" (King 222). Tarrant's reply downplayed his valet's efforts at espionage: "I try to keep him as busy as possible so he won't find out too much too soon..." (King 222). The humorous Katoh could also serve as a serious consultant when needed.

The only problem with viewing Katoh as a young I. A. Moto is that King's book of stories appeared in 1935 after Marquand had completed the manuscript of *No Hero* (later known as *Your Turn, Mr. Moto*). King's book, *The Curious Mr. Tarrant*, was originally published in England despite King's American origins; it remained obscure although Dorothy L. Sayers included a story, "The Episode of the Nail and the Requiem," in her 1936 *Tales of Detection*. The publishing history of the Tarrant stories remains murky (Barzun and Taylor 641); no American edition appeared until the Dover edition of 1972. Unless we can determine that Marquand had access to the Tarrant stories we can only assume a parallel development of Mr. Moto and Katoh.

Anyone who sees Mr. Moto as a figure of fun has missed the point. His clothing may be hair-raising in terms of style and color, but it is only a facade. Mr. Moto is very serious about his work, is capable of violence, and never hesitates to act as an executioner if he considers it

necessary. For the 1930s he was quite revolutionary and anticipated almost every major development in espionage fiction from Fleming to LeCarre and Ludlum. Only one contemporary, Eric Ambler, plumbed the depths of espionage more deeply than Marquand, but Ambler did not utilize a continuing character (Wires 115). The technological wizardry and vast international conspiracies of Fleming and Ludlum are a sub-genre unto themselves. What links Ambler to Marquand is the utilization of ordinary people caught up in events not of their making and sometimes beyond their comprehension.

It would be a serious distortion to state that Americans thought of Asia only in terms of what they read in comic strips, pulp fiction, or such romantic fiction as James Hilton's *Lost Horizon* or Alice Tisdale Hobart's *Oil for the Lamps of China*. American churches had long been fascinated with the idea of converting China's masses to Christianity; American politicians and entrepreneurs were equally fascinated, a phenomenon still observable today (Tuchman 38-39).

James Baird has pointed out that Moto serves as a sort of balance between various Japanese factions as well as between the American protagonists and the turbulent China in which they find themselves involved (1186). During the 1934 trip, Marquand had learned of *feng-shui*, the balance of wind and water or the "balance of things"; he was so impressed by the doctrine that he grew a mustache to balance his facial features (Birmingham 99).

Mr. Moto is never the central character and we never see the internal workings of his mind. He is always seen through the eyes of the American protagonists even though the novels vary between first and third person narration. Because we are not privy to his thoughts, Mr. Moto's actions are unpredictable. Suspense is heightened because of the implied question of how Mr. Moto would react if the death of the American characters would serve his needs better than the deaths of various Russian generals, Japanese ultra-nationalists, or hill bandits.

The strongest quality of the Moto novels is Marquand's ability to evoke a remote land and culture with what Richard Wires terms "verisimilitude" (17). A reader in the 1930s would have accepted Marquand's descriptions of a nation in crisis at face value. Marquand

and his readers agreed that China deserved American sympathy in its struggle against Japanese imperialism. This verisimilitude was present in the first Moto novel, reached its height in the second, and reappeared somewhat in the third and fourth novels. The third and fifth novels are, by and large, weakened by the loss of an Asian setting, particularly the fifth novel, known both as *Mercator Island* and *Last Laugh, Mr. Moto*.

A good example of Marquand's ability to describe the exotic is in the first novel, *No Hero*, now known as *Your Turn, Mr. Moto* (132-33). The life of the river boats and of the people who rarely leave those boats is described eloquently and accurately with no sacrifice of the exotic. The narrator, a seriously alienated aviator whose views on Japanese expansionism reflect American isolationism (36-37), notes "the first glance gave the impression of a land so teeming with humanity that part of that humanity was pushed into the water. Even in that gray of early morning I could tell that we were coming to a country where life was cheap because of its abundance" (132-33).

The narrator, Casey Lees, is taken to the headquarters of one Wu Lai-fu who can be best described as a gangster whose interests combine western technology and traditional Chinese arts. He is described as thin and ascetic, garbed in a plain black robe (146). Wu, at that point, is not unlike Fu Manchu in his more restrained moments. He admits that he is considered a major criminal, but claims he is only a merchant (147). Like Fu, he despises barbarians and hopes to expel all foreigners from Chinese soil; he also threatens Casey with torture but never with the blatant sadism of Sax Rohmer's villain; e.g., the wire jackets in *The Insidious Doctor Fu-Manchu* (88), the rat cages in *The Return of Fu-Manchu* (168-69), and the mutilation of Fu's own daughter in *The Bride of Fu Manchu* (140). Casey is threatened with ropes and unspecified instruments of wood and iron (*Your Turn, Mr. Moto* 150).

An exotic resemblance between Wu and Fu can be seen in Casey's vision of the dragons in Wu's carpet as "writhing toward me slowly" (149). Drug-induced hallucinations were standard fare for Rohmer; e.g., a mushroom-induced delirium in *The Insidious Doctor Fu-Manchu* (166). Casey later described Wu as one who "wouldn't seem real anywhere else in the world" (*Your Turn, Mr. Moto* 190).

Wu is also described as financing bandits in the disputed territory of Manchuria. "There is no penny-dreadful novel more lurid than parts of China and Manchuria these days" (226).

In the second novel, *Thank You, Mr. Moto*, these motifs are developed more fully. The principal villain is a bandit chief named Wu Lo-feng, a major example of Marquand's tendency to recycle names (Wires 70). One has to wonder if Marquand was planning a wide-spread family of villains, but there seems to be no relationship. This second Wu has a different background and his conduct is far less civilized than that of his gangster namesake. His favorite game is to blow people up, but not with gunpowder.

"He simply sets a straw beneath his subject's epidermis. Then everybody interested takes a blow on the straw and the prisoner blows up--quite like a balloon. . . . It's very painful--and not uninteresting. . . . Wu blew up one of my donkey boys. It was only an exhibition put on for me. One gets used to that sort of thing, given time to live." (56-57)

Major Best, the source of this detached observation, also reveals that Wu is effeminate in appearance (37, 118) and is a looter of ancient tombs, an activity to which Fu Manchu was never averse, as in *The Daughter of Fu Manchu* (38-40). Wu, in yet another resemblance to Fu Manchu, utilizes exotic weapons, such as a crossbow, to attack his enemies (*Thank You Mr. Moto* 103).

An obscure reference by Major Best in which he compares Wu's intelligence to that of "the Old Marshal" is important because it illustrates how much Marquand expected his audience to know about contemporary Chinese affairs (37). "The old Marshal" was Chang Tso-lin, an ex-bandit who had started life as a common soldier, as had Marquand's Wu. The old Marshal had worked closely with the Russians and Japanese and was an avid collector; he filled his halls with rare furniture, rugs, bronzes, jade, scroll paintings, and porcelains. In some ways, particularly his "delicate" physique, the Marshal resembled Wu Lo-feng (Tuchman 85).

Marshal Chang was also mentioned once in *Your Turn, Mr. Moto* in his historic role as a friend of Russian emigres seeking to establish a base

in Mongolia (219) and in *Mr. Moto is So Sorry* (323).

Marquand used the old Marshal as a source for Wu Lo-feng, but he used the Marshal's aesthetic obsession as the basis for another character in the novel, Prince Tung, the owner of seven precious scrolls. The set is incomplete: the eighth had been looted from a monastery and is now in the hands of an antique dealer named Pu, an agent of Wu (*Thank You, Mr. Moto* 154). Wu hopes to steal the other seven from Prince Tung, whom he describes as a debauched Manchu, and to sell the complete set of eight to Eleanor Joyce, a museum representative, for \$200,000. At the same time Wu is plotting to infiltrate Peking with his private force and seize the city (163).

As Wu prepares to take Prince Tung, Eleanor Joyce, and Tom Nelson, the narrator, to his camp, he casually orders the beheading of an old man who might be a witness against him. Tom's reaction is very similar to that of Casey: "I had had a glimpse of China which had been kept from me until then, a glimpse of the supreme, callous, mercilessness of that land of overabundant life" (173).

Wu threatens to avenge his honor by subjecting Tom to the straw under the epidermis procedure, but his repeated blustery threats begin to pall. Wu's camp is at an abandoned Buddhist monastery; the faded frescoes make dreamlike patterns, a repetition of the Rohmeresque effect of the writhing dragons (177-78). Even as Wu Lai-fu subsidized bandits, Wu Lo-feng is subsidized by Japanese ultra-nationalists.

Although Wu, whom Marquand compares to a blustering, self-made businessman, is anxious to receive the \$200,000 from Eleanor Joyce, he threatens her with torture and death if Prince Tung and Tom Nelson do not cooperate (209-10). He also threatens to force Tom to eat his own flesh, presumably as a warmup to the main event (211).

When the eight scrolls are assembled and inspected, all characters present are thunderstruck by their beauty, even Wu, who is so distracted that he does not see Eleanor reaching for his gun, a ploy so insane as not to be worth considering (225-27). It does work and the tables are turned. Thanks to the pragmatic Miss Joyce, Nelson and Moto are able to take control of the situation. Marquand had foreshadowed this maneuver by having Moto state that American women are overprotected (194) and by

having Eleanor chide Tom repeatedly for not taking action (214-217).

The novel ends with two surprises. Prince Tung, who had zealously shielded his seven scrolls from profane eyes, is now willing to sell them for \$175,000 (169). We also learn that, off-stage, Mr. Moto has liquidated Wu and Mr. Takahara, an agent of the Japanese ultra-nationalists whom Moto opposes. This ruthless pragmatism was a new element in the series and adds a chill to the final paragraphs of the otherwise happy ending. Mr. Moto also notes that he would have spared Wu if he had had a way to put him to use (278).

Moto describes the death of Wu as a favor to Tom and Eleanor. This reminds us of Marquand's earlier observations about the cheapness of life. His use of mild irony in depicting Prince Tung's willingness to sell his nation's cultural heritage when the price and circumstances are right demonstrates why this novel comes closest to his more traditional novels (Gross 20). An ironic reference to the above events is found in the succeeding novel, *Think Fast, Mr. Moto*. Readers of *Thank You, Mr. Moto* would have appreciated his use of understatement in describing the struggle to defeat Wu and Takahara as "a very little trouble" (15).

At least one more Wu appears in the Moto series. In *Mr. Moto Is So Sorry* a General Wu Fang is described as once serving under the Christian General and now commanding the cavalry near the Mongolian border (346). The Christian General was Marshall Feng Yu-hsiang, a warlord vying for power in Manchuria against two rivals, Chang Tso-ling and Wu Pei-fu (Tuchman 84).

I am convinced that Wu Fang's name was derived from a minor pulp villain and Fu Manchu clone whose adventures had appeared briefly in 1935-36 in a magazine entitled *The Mysterious Wu Fang*. The publishers decided, after seven issues, to change the leering villain's name to Dr. Yen Sin (Weinberg, "The Mysterious Wu Fang" 414-16). The blatant sadism of the cover of the March 1936 issue (Goodstone, plate 99) makes the relationship to Fu Manchu very clear. Dr. Yen Sin lasted three issues before fading into obscurity. One possible reason for his rapid demise was the fear that his name contained an obscene pun (Weinberg, "Dr. Yen Sin," 187).

Thanks to Pearl Harbor, Mr. Moto's career also faded from view. His

reappearance in 1956 allowed Marquand to provide closure for the series. More is learned of Moto's history in *Right You Are, Mr. Moto* than in all of the preceding novels. Foreshadowing of much of what transpires in that novel can be seen in the earlier works, but the idea that a female protagonist could be left to die at the hands of the enemy was rare for its time. The fact that the death of Ruth Bogart takes place off-stage and is never described makes its impact even greater and more convincing than Wu Lo-feng's blustering threats. Her death resulted from a serious misunderstanding by Moto of his opponents. He and Marquand had both learned by 1956 that good intentions do not always guarantee success and that errors in judgment can lead to tragic and fatal consequences; it was a lesson Americans would soon face in Asian affairs.

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Mr. Moto in *Rendezvous in Tokyo*,
Saturday Evening Post (11/24/56-
 1/12/57) [Book: *Stopover Tokyo*]

ANOTHER SYNDICATE PSEUDONYM?

Deidre Johnson
West Chester University

The Axelrad papers at the Beinecke Library at Yale University have provided a wealth of new information about the Stratemeyer Syndicate, while at the same time raising many new questions. One example is a release dated Oct. 9, 1917, signed by W. Bert Foster. It gives Stratemeyer the rights to "a certain story written by me on a title and outline furnished by . . . Edward Stratemeyer and named *John Ryder's Honeymoon*, being based on a story written by me and entitled 'The Rift in the Honeymoon'." The release follows the standard formula: Foster "affirm[s] that . . . work on the story is absolutely new[,] . . . grant[s] to Edward Stratemeyer full permission to print the story under any trademark pen name that may be his business property" and "agree[s] . . . not [to] use such pen name in any manner whatsoever." It ends by noting that "This agreement covers all rights in said story but the original first serial rights . . . as used under the title of 'The Rift in the Honeymoon.'"

The release presents a two-fold bibliographic challenge: locating the serial publication of "The Rift in the Honeymoon" and the book publication of *John Ryder's Honeymoon*. The first issue remains unsolved, for "The Rift in the Honeymoon" has not yet been traced to a serial publication. As for the second, a search of the OCLC database failed to turn up any books titled *John Ryder's Honeymoon*.

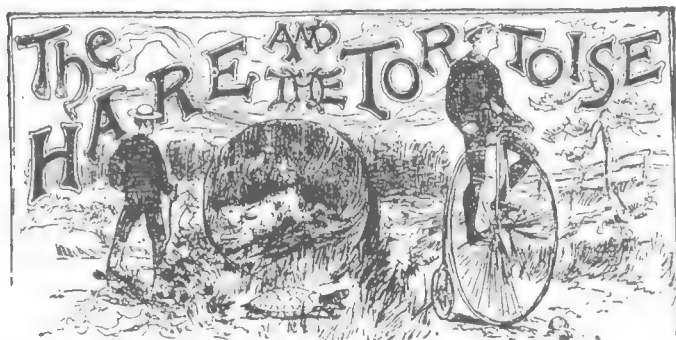
However, the dust jacket of a Sully edition of *Captain Jonah's Fortune* (a Syndicate property tentatively attributed to W. Bert Foster) advertises three titles on its back cover: *Some Honeymoon!* by Charles Everett Hall, *Making Good with Margaret* by E. Ward Strayer, and *The Diamond Cross Mystery* by Chester K. Steele. The last two are known Syndicate titles, the first is not—or is it? The advertising blurb reads:

Does a man know whom he marries when he takes him a wife?
John Ryder thought he did, but his wife was of another opinion.
And the woman—did she or did she not know her own name? A
story full of ludicrous situations and absurd predicaments . . .

from the moment Ryder first meets The Woman until the end, when mystery and misunderstandings are swept away.

The *National Union Catalog Pre-1956 Imprints* and OCLC show that *Some Honeymoon!* was copyrighted in 1918, the year after the release for *John Ryder's Honeymoon* was signed. It is the only work attributed to Charles Everett Hall in the *NUC Pre-1956 Imprints*, raising the possibility that Hall was a pseudonym. It was published by Sully and International Fiction Library, the same publication pattern used for *The Diamond Cross Mystery*. In short, the plot summary—especially the use of the name "John Ryder"—and the publication history suggest the strong possibility that *Some Honeymoon!* is, indeed, the published version of "John Ryder's Honeymoon" and that Charles Everett Hall is a previously unidentified Syndicate pseudonym.

Note: This article would not have been possible without James Keeline, who shared copies of some of the Axelrad papers from the Beinecke Library, and Lonni Nash, who allowed me to explore her collection.



Louisa May Alcott. *Spinning Wheel Stories* (1884); see "Bicycles, Bicycles, Bicycles."

BICYCLES, BICYCLES, BICYCLES

Cecil K. Bilgewater

Our Hero just rode 25 miles on his 1883 Columbia high wheeler bicycle and 10 miles on his 1890 Coventry hard-tired "safety." Both the vintage bikes and the vintage rider (1921—an excellent vintage year) did well. The occasion was the national Wheelmen meet at Mystic Connecticut where 307 dedicated bicyclists met to show they were not as old and infirm as they looked. And they weren't—at least infirm.

The patient reader could make several observations including: (1) "How stupid can you get?" (2) "Don't you have better things to do with your time?" and (3) "What does this have to do with dime novels and/or series books?" Answering these comments in order: (1) "I could have been a lot stupider; I could have done the 'century' ride (100 miles for non-mathematicians) as 57 riders did" (2) "There is nothing better to do with my time than to collect books," and (3) "Bicycles have a lot to do with dime novels and kids' books."

Many of the Wheelmen know about the bicycle stories in dime novels and boys' books and collect them avidly. Perhaps greedily is more accurate. Any copies of Castlemon's *The Steel Horse*, as an example, are quickly snapped up. Wheelmen not only collect and ride all types and varieties of antique bicycles, they collect any and all ancillary and peripheral material as well. Cecil K. disturbed the natives at the meet headquarters by trying bugle calls on an antique bicycle bugle, originally used to direct bicyclists. Concern was expressed that Mr. Bilgewater should be directed out of the Motel.

In the 20 years from 1880 to 1900 bicycles not only loomed large in the national consciousness, but were a primary influence in shaping our national direction. Nowadays we think of the "high wheeler" (first called just a bicycle and then called an "Ordinary" bicycle to distinguish it from the "Safety" bicycle which was introduced about 1888) as a quaint, old, and somewhat ridiculous anachronism. In its time it was as avant-garde as the moon landing was in ours. It was not a toy but rather an expensive machine for daring and adventuresome youth.

Both men and women rode high wheelers, though many more women rode the "Safety" bike—with two wheels of the same size—when it became available. A good machine cost \$135, which was a lot of money in the 1880's.

The bicycle brought a great deal of excitement as well as technical advancement and many social changes to the American scene. Consider the effect of the bicycle on such things as women's fashions and on the freedom it gave women to travel as they wished without chaperons. The bicycle has been called the most radical and effective force in the liberation of women.

The improved manufacturing techniques developed for the production of bicycles and the demand for better roads for bicycles were adapted to the automobile and our national road system. No wonder the bicycle was so exciting and figured so largely in literature of all types towards the end of the last century.

As examples, three well-known authors for children, Louisa May Alcott, Harry Castlemon, and Edward Stratemeyer, included bicycles in their fiction. Alcott and Castlemon wrote about High Wheelers while Stratemeyer wrote about Safeties.

"The Hare and the Tortoise" appeared in Alcott's *Spinning Wheel Stories*, published in 1884 near the end of the author's life. The original edition pictures a high wheeler at the head of the first page of the story. Alcott told an engaging story about high wheel bicycles and a boy who was trying to get his older brother to give him his old wheel.

The kid brother walked 20 miles to the bicycle meet; his older brother took a bad header on his bike and couldn't ride at the meet and a wealthy uncle bought the kid brother a new first class high wheeler. Virtue triumphed, the older brother got his comeuppance, and the kid got his bike. Like so many of Alcott's short stories this one still reads well.

Alcott was not a true believer, however, judging from such quotes as this:

...women grew skilful in the binding of wounds and the mending of sorely rent garments, gay girls begged for rides, standing on the little step behind, and boys clamored for bicycles that they might join the army of martyrs to the last craze.

Harry Castlemon (Charles Austin Fosdick) wrote a series of three books (1886-1888) in his "Forest and Stream" series which featured Joe Wayring: *Joe Wayring at Home; or, The Adventures of a Fly-Rod*, *Snagged and Sunk; or, The Adventures of a Canvas Canoe*, and *The Steel Horse; or, The Rambles of a Bicycle*. An interesting feature of these books is that they purport to be narrated by the fly rod, the canoe, and the bicycle, perhaps dictated to and recorded by Castlemon. Near the end of *Snagged and Sunk* (the canoe ran into some problems), Joe Wayring found "an elegant nickel-plated bicycle" in his room with a card from the bike which read in part,

...use me regularly and judiciously, and if you do not say that life has suddenly doubled its charm—if you do not, before the end of the year, notice a thousand and one improvements in yourself, both physically and mentally, then I shall have failed of my mission.

It was signed "An Expert Columbia."

As a matter of intense personal interest (to this writer) Cecil K.'s bike is also an Expert Columbia of the same vintage, but no one has commented on the "thousand and one physical and mental improvements" in Cecil K. Be that as it may, Castlemon appears to have had a more positive attitude than Alcott towards bicycles.

In Castlemon's *The Steel Horse* Joe Wayring and his friends (all of whom had acquired high wheelers) spent the summer "covering an astonishing number of miles, and saving valuable lives." *The Publishers' Weekly* of December 15, 1888, notes that "The narrative describes the interesting and exciting incidents of their vacation run on bicycles through their native state." And exciting the events were. They prevented a "terrible disaster" when they found a big rock which had been rolled onto a railroad track. Joe Wayring rode his high wheeler at night across a high railroad trestle, a very dangerous and difficult feat, stopped the train, and prevented a serious wreck. In another incident one of the group was shanghaied on board a ship and escaped with difficulty.

Each boy had "slung over his shoulder a bicycle gun-case containing a fourteen-inch pocket rifle." This proved helpful when they headed for "Glen's Falls" for sport. They came across a pack of vagabond dogs who

had just killed a sheep and in the ensuing fracas—the dogs proved unbelievably unfriendly—shot two of the dogs dead. This provoked the natives, and things became exciting before the wheelmen finished their glorious run of "six hundred and forty-miles in thirty-five days."

Edward Stratemeyer is best known for writing the Rover Boys and Dave Porter series plus over one hundred other boys' books, to say nothing of producing—through his Stratemeyer Literary Syndicate—Tom Swift, Nancy Drew, the Hardy Boys, et al. In the 1890's Stratemeyer wrote dime novels for Street and Smith and other publishers as well as serials for boys' magazines. Judging from the number of his bicycle stories, he either was addressing a popular theme or personally liked bicycles—perhaps both.

The *New York Five Cent Library*, published by Street and Smith, included four bicycle stories signed by "Jimmy." Although the real Arthur Zimmerman or "Jimmy" was a noted bicycle racer of the time, the Street and Smith records at Syracuse University identify Stratemeyer as the actual writer.

The first, on August 5, 1893, was "Jack and Jerry, the Bicycle Wonders; or, Lively Times on the Wheel." The boys have lively times indeed. They skirt numerous disasters, distribute righteous retribution to assorted villains, and also manage to accumulate plenty of money.

Another bicycle story signed "Roy Rockwood" (an early Stratemeyer pen-name) was "Flyer Fred, the Cyclist Ferret; or, Running Down the Rough and Ready Rascals." It appeared in *Beadle's Half-Dime Library* on August 17, 1897. The story combines detective work and bicycling and at the end Fred is "not only the champion cyclist, but the keenest ferret of the country." The title says it all.

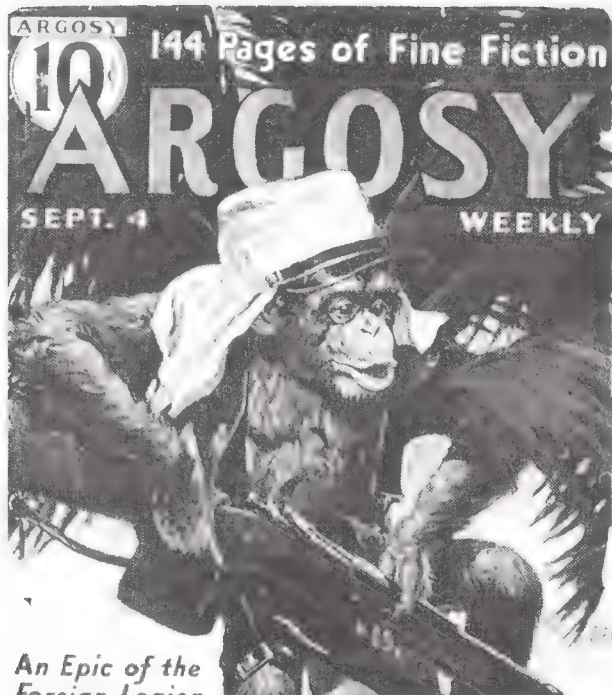
Stratemeyer's serial, "Joe Johnson, the Bicycle Wonder; or, Riding for the Championship of the World" appeared in *Young Sports of America* in June and July of 1895. The author was again "Roy Rockwood," although when the story appeared in hard-covers in 1897—padded with material from Stratemeyer's magazine *Bright Days*—the title was *The Rival Bicyclists; or, Fun and Adventure on the Wheel* and the author was "Capt. Ralph Bonehill." Joe Johnson survived numerous brushes with death from lightning, gypsies, a snow storm, a bomb, a forest fire, and

the usual perils commonly encountered by stout-hearted heroes. In addition Joe proved to be an outstanding bicycle racer and in the last chapter became the champion two-mile bicycle rider of the country.

So, there really is a connection among boys' books, dime novels, and the Wheelmen. Wheelmen are nice folk. They are both athletic and literate. They enjoy riding machines which were once in the vanguard of our culture and are still very efficient and perfectly practical. The records of our coast-to-coast high wheeler riders prove it. The more than 300 Wheelmen gathered at the Mystic national meet also proved it. Perhaps riding high wheelers does not always "double life's charm" nor produce a "thousand and one improvements in yourself, both physically and mentally," but then again, perhaps it does. Just ask any Wheelman.



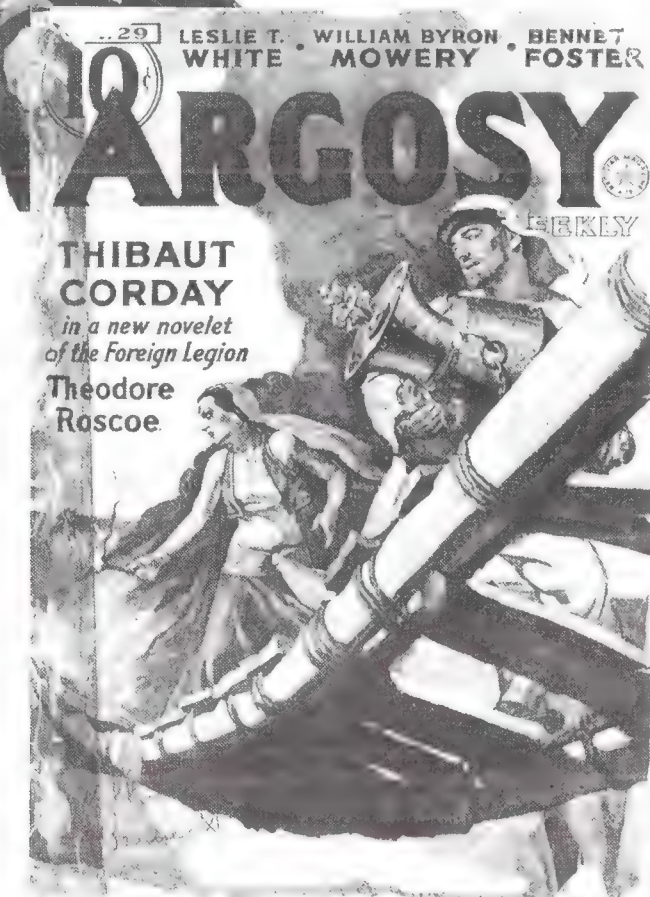
THE RUN FOR SAFETY.



*An Epic of the
Foreign Legion*

**Monkey See,
Monkey Do**

by Theodore Roscoe



**THIBAUT
CORDAY**

*in a new novelet
of the Foreign Legion*

**Theodore
Roscoe**

Theodore Roscoe (1906-1993) was a prolific author of adventure fiction, most of it published in *Argosy* magazine. Among his most popular characters was Thibaut Corday, who might be compared with Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Brigadier Gerard. If a hero tells his own story, can he be blamed for a little harmless exaggeration?

THE GREAT FOREIGN LEGION STORYTELLER: A SAMPLING OF THIBAUT CORDAY

Rocco Musemeche
New Iberia, LA

But who was Thibaut Corday and why all the subdued but respectable plaudits?

The venerable retired French Foreign Legionnaire was as well known in his hey-day as Lindbergh, Caruso, or cowboy actor Ken Maynard. Strange, for he held none of the qualities of that trio of celebrities.

Non, but Corday did have a recognition apart from Lindbergh, Caruso, and Maynard for he was a gifted storyteller and popular hero found in a bevy of publications on the racks of the nation's newsstands. The name flared gaudily from the pages and covers of *Argosy* magazine with regularity during the 1930s. It was a name that conjured up a darn good read ...

Corday was a 40-year veteran of the Legion and his storytelling in "Jacques the Giant Killer" (*Argosy*, July 11, 1936) suggests him to be 87 years of age then. You must know the story . . . The smallest legionnaire setting out to win the largest woman in the world, she who ran the wineshop, Cafe of the Vine, in a drab Moroccan village on the edge of the Sahara.

Describe Corday? A bald, leathery head, thick eyebrows over a pair of blue eyes, and a cinnamon beard that while autumnal is without a trace of winter. More often than not the beard parts as a delightful series of yarns issues forth, fueled by a fiery cognac and a cheap wine. A stubby pipe whose tobacco smells and looks like camel hair juts out arrogantly.

It is not age, Corday's creator, Theodore Roscoe, maintains, but

medals that stoop the shoulders of the ancient storyteller/warrior, medals earned with the Confederates out of New Orleans, the British in the Boer War, and skirmishes in Holland and Spain.

Corday spins his tale at the drop of a glass of cognac in words never slurred but well chosen, colorful with French expressions. The gems he tells while seated at a sidewalk cafe as the Algerian night veils in from the Kasbah Quarters to catfoot softly over the ramps fronting the Boulevard Sadi Carnot. The only sounds come from the thump of an Ouled Nail drum and the muezzin call to prayer from a far minaret.

Corday must surely have been related to Scheherazade for the stories come in a potpourri of adventure, mystery, and humor against exotic locales. They can be depended upon to be replete with unusual endings, whiplash O. Henry twists, and settings from East of Suez across Africa. After a few of these one admits to being in the presence of a master raconteur.

Choose at random, if you please, a tale from the occupant of a table at the Brasserie Terminus Cafe as twilight shrouds Algiers.

Have you heard of "The Ears of Donkey Daudette" (*Argosy*, January 19, 1935)? *Non*? Well, legionnaire Baude Daudette soon earned the name "donkey" due to two enormous flaps extending from his head, which he left hidden from public view. Do you blame him? Two of the largest ears on the planet needed to be hidden.

Donkey Daudette, weed thin and shy as a blushing maiden, appears a cringing individual as he ponders his situation in a fort smack dab in a Senegalese jungle wild with tribesmen bent on attacking him to gain that pair of ears. For you see, these tribesmen collected ears much as any other collectors seek stamps or coins.

Those ears however were the first to pick up the stealthy approach of the enemy. This was not surprising for Daudette could hear whispers from Stockholm to Palermo.

Corday in his inimitable style described the battle as a hand to hand melee as "smoke unrolled in crimson scrolls above the thin line of blue tinted legionnaires as the sky took fire and the air burst and sang."

In the middle of that maelstrom the Senegalese slashed off Daudette's ears, prompting remorse among the legionnaires and a resurging will to

fight. It was Christianity Jensen who whipped out his sash to wind it about the head of Daudette to make a bandage and give a Samaritan touch to that poor unfortunate.

But hold! Corday is to provide a stunning epilogue, the usual twist which cannot be disclosed, much as the secret of "The Wonderful Lamp of Thibaut Corday" (*Argosy*, April 29, 1939) cannot be disclosed. "Wonderful Lamp" is another Corday frolic in the Near East atmosphere with Sindbad and Aladdin touches and a mysterious lamp plus native girl.

As a story, "Lamp" is easily a part of the 1001 nights' entertainment. The reader's interest is lead along narrow, winding, pedestrian clogged streets, in teeming cities, to busy market places and lonely desert campfires. It is a run for the roses chase in which the cover illustration presents a good sample of the story's action as a legionnaire clasping the lamp races across a rickety footbridge high above a chasm with native girl hot on his heels. *Voila!*

The cover is calculated to make you plunge a hand into the pocket of your jeans in hopes of coming up with the required dime to purchase that there *Argosy*, since you just gotta find out if the pair made it across okay. Or did the swaying contraption of a bridge give way plunging the pair halfway to China?

But Corday probably scored heaviest with a story in *Argosy* of September 4, 1937, whose cover illustration of a monkey grasping a rifle and sporting a Foreign Legion headpiece made history and became a collector's item. The story, "Monkey See, Monkey Do," marked the first time a monkey went up against the firing squad.

But why spoil a good story by so teasing the modern reader? Why not let Corday tell his story in his own way in the sidewalk cafe in Algiers where one is assured of a pleasant oasis for pleasant storytelling?

Editor's Note: Other Corday stories include "Toughest in the Legion" (*Argosy*, February 4, 1933); "The Bearded Slayer" (*Argosy*, April 11-18, 1931); and "Snake-Head" (*Argosy*, January 7, 1939). In addition, there is a collection of Theodore Roscoe's Thibaut Corday stories in *Toughest in the Legion* (Mercer Island, WA: Starmont House, 1989).

CONVENTION REPORT:

Pulpcon #23

Richard Bleiler
University of Connecticut

Pulpcon #23—which was, in fact, the 24th Pulpcon, since the Pulpcon of late Summer, 1993 was designated with a letter and not a number—was held at Bowling Green State University in Bowling Green, Ohio, from Thursday through Sunday, August 4 to 7. The dates of the convention conflicted with the dates for other conventions, including the San Diego ComiCon, but registered attendance for the Pulpcon actually set a record, with 275 memberships sold before the start of the convention. The guests of honor were writers Harold Q. Masur, Nelson Nye, and Bruce Cassidy, with such stalwarts as Shirley Steeger (whose husband, Harry Steeger, was president of Popular Publications), Ryerson Johnson (a prolific writer of pulp novels), and mystery writer Michael Avallone also in attendance.

The Pulpcon is a convention that operates primarily for the collectors and fans, and its programming is non-academic, reflecting the interests of its membership. Thursday's program featured Robert Lesser and Alison M. Scott and was devoted to the collecting and care of pulp magazine art. Lesser has what is probably the finest collection of pulp magazine art in private hands. Scott is curator of Bowling Green's Popular Culture Library, and their presentation was alternately anecdotal and serious. Friday's program, on the grading and pricing of pulp magazines, featured Howard DeVore, Jack Deveny, Rusty Hevelin, and John Gunnison, and was inconclusive, the participants identifying their grading and pricing system(s) but failing to arrive at any consensus. Categories proposed for the grading and pricing included the author, the cover artist, and the physical condition. All agreed, however, that the highest grade they could give a pulp magazine was "newsstand quality" and that their prices were in one important respect quite arbitrary: they would quote a lower price to a buyer who bought many pulps rather than merely one issue. Saturday's program, entitled "Memories of the Best...and Why They Were," was far more personal, with such people as Walker Martin and Will Murray talking about their favorite magazines and the stories and series published in them. Also on Saturday was the Pulpcon Radio Players' presentation of a vintage script from *The Saint* radio mystery show.

Mystery writer Harold Q. Masur delivered his speech on Friday evening, an

apparently impromptu and delightfully anecdotal address that touched upon many facets of his long career and some of the people he knew. Cassiday's Saturday evening address was the diametric opposite, a carefully prepared account of life as a writer of westerns and mysteries and then as an editor for Popular Publications. The text of his speech will be published in Doug Ellis's *Pulp Vault* accompanied by a bio-bibliography of Cassiday compiled by the present writer.

While much of Pulpcon was routine and familiar to previous attendees, its location was exceptional, for Bowling Green State University's world-renowned Popular Culture Center was within easy walking distance of the Convention Center. Led by Alison Scott, the staff of the Popular Culture Library gave regular tours, permitting Pulpcon members to view the contents of the ordinarily closed stacks.

An added treat was the display in Bowling Green's gallery of "The Lurid and the Alluring," 70 paintings from Robert Lesser's personal collection of pulp art. Visitors to the gallery could see original paintings (and the covers for which they were created) by such artists as J. Allen St. John, Rafael de Soto, Frank Paul, Hannes Bok, Robert Fuqua, Howard V. Browne, Walter M. Baumhofer, and Virgil Finlay, to name only a few. Lesser expressed his frustration that, so far, no publisher had agreed to do a catalogue of the exhibition or of his collection since pulp art is still not taken seriously.

Curiously, the editors of Bowling Green State University's Popular Press seemed unaware of the presence of the Pulpcon and had not arranged a display of their publications in the dealer's room. Potential customers were further thwarted on Friday, the first full day of the convention, to discover the offices of the Popular Press had closed early for the weekend.

There were two unexpected climaxes, both occurring on Saturday. A mint copy ("newsstand quality") of the January 1930 issue of *Astounding Stories of Super-Science* (vol. 1, no. 1) sold at auction for \$650, substantially more than was anticipated. The magazine was originally part of the Winston Dawson collection and proceeds from the sale benefitted the Dawson family. The annual Lamont Award for contributions to pulp magazine fandom and Pulpcon activities went to Donald and Carol Ramlow. Carol, who was videotaping the ceremonies, had to quickly find someone else to run the videocamera to record the presentation and acceptance of the award.

Where will the 1995 Pulpcon be located? While no site was determined, the majority of the attendees were favorably disposed towards a return to Bowling Green when the Guest of Honor will probably be Michael Avallone.

Recent books in review, or forthcoming publications noted.

THE UNITED STATES INVADED!

Death's Ragged Army, by Curtis Steele (Emile Tepperman). In *Pulp Review* #18 (November 1994). \$6.00, plus \$1 postage from The Pulp Collector Press, P. O. Box 3232, Frederick, MD 21705.

Among the most interesting of the hero pulp magazines was one from Popular Publications, *Operator* #5, which published 48 issues between April 1934 and November 1939. Written by several authors using the "Curtis Steele" house name, the novels told the continuing story of Jimmy Christopher, special agent for United States Intelligence, and his war against those who would destroy America. The categories of "future war" fiction and "invasion" stories have a long history, from turn of the century British writers who concocted yarns about the invasion of England from the continent to Harrie Irving Hancock's famous *Conquest of the United States* series in 1916. The impetus for the "Operator 5" novels may have originated in the contemporary fear of fascism and invasion from abroad. We should remember that it was in 1935 when Sinclair Lewis published his famous novel about the rise of a dictator in the United States, *It Can't Happen Here*.

Between June 1936 and March 1938, the magazine published the legendary "Purple Invasion" series of thirteen novels about a period when the United States was taken over by the Purple Empire of Maximilian I. Only Jimmy Christopher and his band of resistance agents stand in the way of the invaders.

The style and content of the stories resemble some of the boys' adventure series by R. Sidney Bowen (himself a writer of novels for the pulps) and R. R. Winterbotham (writing as Al Avery). There is a zestful enthusiasm that carries the reader along. This is the fourth attempt to reprint the *Operator 5* series. Nearly thirty years ago (1966), Corinth Books published eight titles, a few years later (1974) Freeway Press began with the first novel, *The Masked Invasion*, but abandoned the project after three volumes. Another three novels were reprinted in facsimile by Dimedia Publications in 1980. The Pulp Collector Press intends reissuing, in facsimile of the original pulp pages, illustrations, advertisements and all, the entire "Purple Invasion" series. This is a project worth the support of everyone with an interest in the original era of the pulp adventure novel or in the social history of the United States in the 1930s. jrc

REFERENCE DIRECTORIES AND BIBLIOGRAPHIES

FOR COLLECTORS

Gil O'Gara, comp. *The Yellowback Library Directory of Series Book Collectors 1994-95*. Publisher Gil O'Gara, Yellowback Press, P. O. Box 36172, Des Moines, IA 50315. 18 + 33 pp. \$7.50.

Lists names and addresses of about 250 collectors of series books. As with so many collectors, interests vary widely, and in addition to series books, "wants" listed include dime novels, pulp magazines, Oz books, Uncle Wiggily, British series, *American Boy* magazine, and much else. Five most wanted titles or special interests are listed for each collector. Indicates if individuals trade, buy, and sell; if they send out want lists, sale lists or wish to receive such lists. Especially useful is an Index of title, series or topic, with the names of collectors cross-referenced.

Indispensable for collectors of series books, this directory is also useful for finding people with collecting interests similar to yours, who might have duplicates for trade or sale. Obviously useful for book dealers, too.

EL

FARAH RETURNS!

Dave Farah. *Farah's Guide to Nancy Drew Books and Collectibles*. 10th printing. ca 500 pp. Privately printed, 1994. \$60 ppd. spiral binding. Available from Dave Farah, 401 E. California Blvd. #106, Pasadena, CA 91106-3794.

This is the 10th printing (actually, edition) of Dave Farah's bibliographic guide to Nancy Drew titles published between 1930 and 1979. According to the author, it contains more listings, more photographs, and more background information than the previous edition.

For those unacquainted with previous editions, *Farah's Guide* describes all the printings—sometimes several in a year—of the first 56 Nancy Drew books. An introductory section delineates the different cover stocks, endpapers, cover and dust jacket designs, and formats; entries for each title list the points for identifying specific printings, using a coded system carefully explained in the introduction. There is also information on book club editions as well as on various related collectibles, such as the Nancy Drew jigsaw puzzle, games, and dolls.

Farah's Guide also contains valuable information for Stratemeyer Syndicate

researchers. Entries for most titles begin by naming the authors of the manuscript, the plot outline, and the adaption (although Farah does not cite a source for this information), as well as the illustrators—and often the models—for the cover art. Some entries incorporate photos and biographies of ghostwriters and artists; others offer additional information about the book or its cover art (the latter presumably based on Farah's interviews with Rudy Nappi). There are more than 20 reproductions of the photographs used by Nappi as the basis for his covers, thus allowing a rare glimpse into the process of series book illustration.

All in all, despite the hefty price, *Farah's Guide* continues as an indispensable volume for the serious Nancy Drew collector or series book researcher.

Deidre A. Johnson
West Chester University

RECENTLY PUBLISHED BOOKS OF INTEREST

CONCERNING PULPS

Behind the Mask, No. 28, September 1994. \$4.85 a copy, \$19.00 for 4 issues, \$28.00 for 6 issues. Editors and publishers: Tom and Ginger Johnson, 504 E. Morris Street, Seymour, TX 76380.

Reprints pulp stories "Ghost of the Undead" by Stuart Towne (pseud. of Clayton Rawson), from *Red Star Mystery*, June 1940; "The House of Horror" by Johnston McCulley, from *Detective Story Magazine*, November 12, 1918.
—EL

PARODIES AND PASTISHES

The Case of the Good For Nothing Girlfriend: A Nancy Clue Mystery, by Mabel Maney. 180 pp. Pittsburgh, PA: Cleis Press, 1994. Available from the publisher at P. O. Box 8933, Pittsburgh, PA 15221. ISBN 0-939416-90-50. Price: hardbound \$24.95; paper \$10.95

The second adventure of detective Nancy Clue along with Cherry Aimless and a sequel to *The Case of the Not-so-Nice Nurse: Cherry Aimless Meets Nancy Clue* (Cleis Press, 1993. ISBN 0-939416-76-X, \$9.95). Set in River Depths, IL, the mystery involves the murder of Nancy's father, perhaps by beloved housekeeper Hannah Gruel. Nancy Clue is accompanied by her friends Bess

Marvel and George Fey. This is a parody of both lesbian fiction and series books. Lovers of parodies and completist collectors might want to seek out these titles although one reader has suggested the joke wears thin after a while.

Joe Slavin III
Arlington, VA

TOM SWIFT RIDES AGAIN!

Victor Appleton. *Tom Swift and His Motor-Cycle; Tom Swift and His Motor Boat; Tom Swift and His Airship*. Bedford, MA: Applewood Books, 1992. \$12.95 each.

These are facsimile reprints, including copies of the original frontispieces, dust jackets, and binding designs, of the first three volumes in this famous series. To the trained eye it will be obvious these may not have been copied from the earliest printings of these titles (the number of titles in the series listed in the back page advertisements) and there is no introduction nor reference to the real author anywhere in the text or dust jacket advertising. Nicely done and a project worth supporting.

jrc

LETTERS

What a wonderful job you are doing with the *Round-Up*. It reminds me of when Miller had it and Eddie saw to it that it was put together by a professional printer. I don't know that I want to recommend you to the chair editorial for as long a term of years as your predecessor; however, a few decades or so, or even a generation, would certainly fortify you for a restful stay at the local STREET & SMITH NURSING HOME, soon to begin operations somewhere in Minnesota.

Peter C. Walther
Walden, New York

Greatly appreciate your continuing the publication.

Henry F. Hicks
Needham, Mass.

I enjoy the DNR and always look forward to receiving it. Good luck on your turn at the helm.

Gary Frisch
Lincoln, England

On the Comstock article [in the August issue], there is one aspect that has not been addressed, and that is the impact of his efforts. I personally believe that his efforts had very little effect. Frank Tousey did not discontinue the Jesse James stories. He simply used the James Boys stories in the *Wide Awake Library* and transferred them to the *New York Detective Library* where he published them without stopping. Street & Smith also published bandit stories (Jesse James and the Dalton Gang) in the *Log Cabin Library*. A modern counterpart would be the opposition to *Playboy*. If one were to [consider] only the articles and action against *Playboy*, it would appear that the whole country was up in arms, but it had no effect on *Playboy*. It was published without interruption and [the agitation] probably contributed to increased sales.

Eddie LeBlanc
Fall River, Mass.

NOTES & QUERIES

Corrections Dept. We must apologize for having left off the date of publication of *This Side of Parodies* in the footnote to Mr. McMahan's article on the Hardy Boys in the October issue. The book was published in 1974 and is currently out of print. We thank John Cody for calling this to our attention as well as for reminding us of some of the classic collections of parodies from past years that fall within our field. Corey Ford's *Three Rousing Cheers for the Rollo Boys* (Doran, 1925), for example. We could also suggest George Ade's *Bang! Bang!* (J. H. Sears, 1928) as a marvelous send-up of dime novels and Stephen Leacock's *Nonsense Novels* (John Lane, 1911) as well. Copies of the last two are on your editor's office shelves.

More Parodies. Gil O'Gara sent us a xerox of part of an issue of the *Old Cap, Collier Library* that contains burlesque profiles of some of the staff writers at Norman L. Munro. We have some ideas for doing a longer article on this aspect of our studies in the near future.

Query Answered. Ed Lauterbach reports that he has learned the author of *ZR Wins* (Appleton, 1924) was Fitzhugh Green. Your editor had two messages (from Jack Bales and Richard Bleiler) in response to this as well. Next question?

Man in the News. Sam Moskowitz has been busy lately. He was the keynote speaker at the National Convention of the [Edgar Rice] Burroughs Bibliophiles in Atlanta in September and was interviewed by an Associated Press reporter about his extensive collection of science fiction and his knowledge of the subject. What caught our eye was the sentence: "He has approximately 1,400 dime novels, dating from 1878 to 1923, and he owns every known dime novel reference work."

Recent Periodicals. Two periodicals have come into your editor's office recently. One is *The Susabella Passengers and Friends* published six times a year by Garrett K. Lothe, 80 Ocean Pines Lane, Pebble Beach, CA 93953 (\$10 for an annual subscription). The publication is for collectors of series books and while it is new, the group who sponsors it has been meeting as a club of like-minded individuals for over twenty years! Named for the yacht in the Beverly Gray mystery stories, this publication is obviously a labor of love and an example of the fun that series book collecting can bring. A feature of each issue is a quiz on a specific book.

The other periodical is the quarterly newsletter of the Friends of Freddy, *The Bean Home Newsletter*. Freddy, for those who may not know, is the pig hero (heroic pig?) of the books of Walter R. Brooks. (\$12 for a two year membership; write Connie Arnold, 5A Laurel Hill Rd. Greenbelt, MD 20770) The members have recently returned from their bi-annual meeting in Fleischmann, New York.

Buffalo Bill Rides Again. A recent article in the Travel section of the Sunday *Minneapolis Star Tribune* (syndicated from the *Houston Chronicle*) focused on the Buffalo Bill Memorial Museum at Lookout Mountain near Golden, Colorado. To quote one paragraph: "One of the better diorama exhibits features the dime novels and the *Buffalo Bill Weekly*, publications that enhanced Cody's heroic reputation. In these popular publications, Cody fought not only Indians but also Russians, spies, anarchists and other bad guys." (We opine the writer must have meant either *Buffalo Bill Stories* or the *New Buffalo Bill Weekly*, both Street & Smith publications.)

And Now a Word from a Guest.

QUERY: If you were Eddie LeBlanc, and couldn't sleep at night, what would you do?

Most of us would probably count sheep.

However, if I were Eddie, I would think back about how our beloved field of Dime Novels and related areas of boys and girls books has prospered during the past thirty years or so. We have a number of periodicals which arrive at our doorstep on a regular basis, and any number of books have been written: GOOD books which we are proud to display on our shelves. Solid research has been accomplished in the fields of specific authors and genera, not to mention publishers' histories, series and character analyses and choice archival discoveries. Popular literature is at the breakwater of literary respectability; I recently saw a documentary on TV about the James Brothers, and the closing credits of this A&E program cited Edward T. LeBlanc for special mention. We are made more aware, than ever before, of the wealth of materials libraries have to offer in the areas for private research: Syracuse University, the Hess Collection, the University of South Florida and the American Antiquarian Society are only four that readily spring to mind. Individuals often boast of choice items pertaining to certain authors or subjects, and we seem to enjoy, all of us, a rich and friendly link-up of support and assistance. Might we term our fraternity a Human Modem? There are annual conventions, book meets and scholarly paper readings. Many of us (Randy Cox, Victor Berch, Jack Bales, W. R. Gowen, Jack Dizer, Gil O'Gara, Lydia Schurman, Deidre Johnson, Peter Walther, Gil Westgard, and the list goes on; shall I continue?) are indebted to Eddie's gracious offers of material and advice. The Dime Novel has come out of the closet, and its newly clothed garments of respectability are largely due to the pioneering efforts of Eddie LeBlanc these past fifty years.

Where will he heading in the next fifty? As Roy Blakeley would have quipped:

"What happens when you spill ink on the carpet?"

"That remains to be seen."

I expect the future of Dime Novel collecting will be an adventure we all anticipate, much as our literary heroes would have. But let's remain in the present for now. A standing ovation for Eddie LeBlanc, for guiding us to our present sure position, from darkness and apathy into this present decade of truth and light.

Thank-you, Eddie, from all of us.



Dime Novel Sketches series by Edward T. LeBlanc

Cover photo courtesy of Children's Literature Research Collections (George Hess Collection), University of Minnesota

WANTED

Roy Rockwood Great Marvel Series (*The City Beyond the Clouds*, etc.), Jack Harkaway books, and tobacco card albums.

J. Koster

21 Sherwood Drive
(315) 769-6968

Massena, NY 13662

BOOKS FOR SALE

NEW MAGNET LIBRARY (no covers) nos. 888, 956, 989, 1045, 1047 ea. \$1

Alger. <i>Tony the Hero</i> (clean Burt; no f.)	\$6
_____. <i>Frank Fowler</i> (clean Burt)	\$8
_____. <i>Andy Gordon</i> (Federal)	\$4
_____. <i>Out for Business</i> (Mershon)	\$10
_____. <i>Tom the Bootblack</i> (early Burt)	\$7
Foster. <i>From Sea to Sea</i> (Donohue, 1914)	\$4
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